Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

DDMHS, Weeks Building, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1601 (802-241-2638)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
            Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani and Monica Simon

DATE: March 26, 2004

RE: Criminalization/Diversion of Adults with Serious Mental Illness

The degree to which recipients of mental health services appear on the caseloads of criminal justice agencies provides an important measure of diversion from or engulfment (criminalization) by the criminal justice system. This week's PIP compares the rate at which service recipients were charged with a crime to the rate at which they were incarcerated during FY 2001-03 in Vermont. We use the term <u>diversion</u> to refer to a process in which offenders with serious mental illness tend to be removed from the criminal justice system.

Our indicator of criminalization/diversion is based on comparisons of incarceration rates and rates of criminal charging for two groups of adults over a period of three years (FY'01-'03): adults with serious mental illness (N=3,192 per year) and adults in the general population of the State of Vermont (N=461,304). Computation of this indicator involves a three step process. First, incarceration rates and rates of criminal charging are determined for both groups. Three data sets, each of which includes the date of birth and gender of all individuals represented, are involved in this computation. The first data set includes all recipients of CMHC Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) services for adults with serious mental illness, the second includes all adults who were charged with a crime (N=13,054 per year), and the third includes all individuals who were incarcerated (N=6,016 per year). Because these data sets do not include unique person identifiers, Probabilistic Population Estimation was used to determine the unduplicated number of adults represented in each data set, as well as the number of CRT clients who were charged and the number who were incarcerated. These numbers, in conjunction with census data, provide for the computation of criminal charging and incarceration rates for CRT clients and for the general population.

The second step in the computation involves the determination of relative rate of incarceration for both groups. Relative rate of incarceration is obtained by dividing the incarceration rate by the rates of criminal charging for both groups. For instance, if 7% of CRT clients were charged and 5% were incarcerated, the relative rate of incarceration would be .7.

The final step of the computation involves comparing the relative rate for CRT clients to the relative rate for the general population. This criminalization index is obtained by dividing the relative rate for CRT clients by the relative rate for the general population.   If the relative rate for

CRT clients were .7 and the relative rate for the general population were .5, the criminalization index would be 1.4. That is, CRT clients would be 1.4 times as likely as members of the general population to be engulfed by the criminal justice system.

We will interpret results of this computation that are not significantly different from 1.0 as indicating equitable treatment of adults with serious mental illness. We will interpret results of this computation that are significantly greater than 1.0 as indicating that the criminal justice system "criminalizes" adults with serious mental illness. We would interpret results of this computation that were significantly less than 1.0 as describing a criminal justice system that practices "diversion" of adults with serious mental illness.
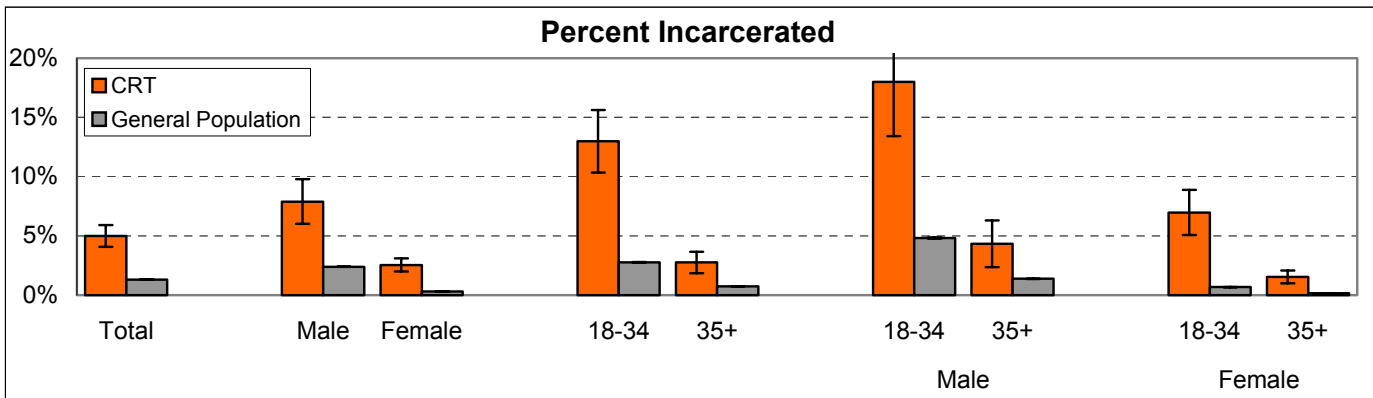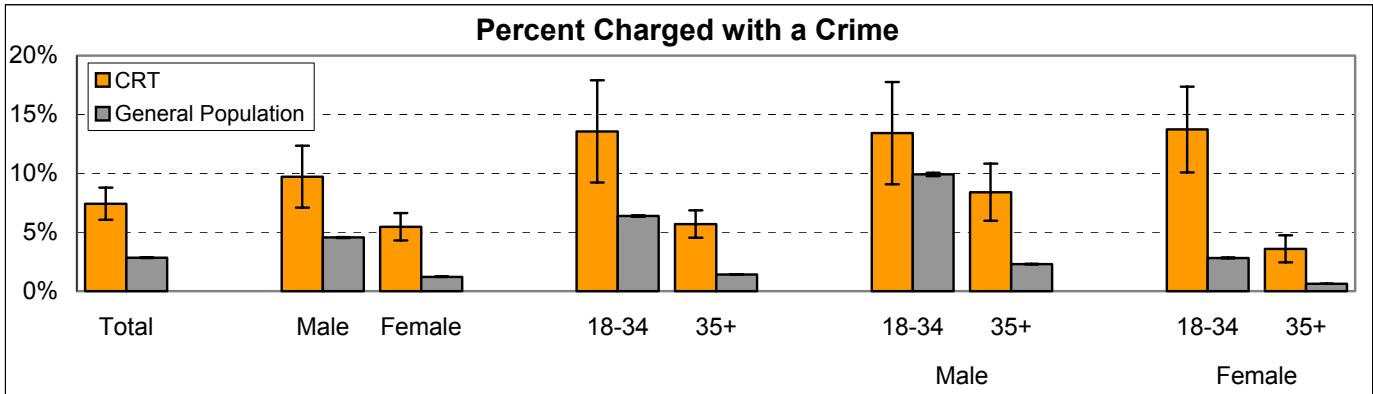
As you will see, the relative rate of incarceration for the CRT population as a whole is statistically significantly (1.45 or 45%) greater than the relative rate for the general population. The difference between CRT service recipients and the general population in terms of relative rate of incarceration is greatest for young men (2.76 times the general population rate), followed by young people in general (2.21), young women (2.10) and women in general (1.87). There were no statistically significant differences between CRT clients and the general population for adults over 35 years or for men overall.

This analysis also provides important information about the criminal justice involvement of adults with serious mental illness in Vermont. CRT clients, for instance, are more than twice (2.6 times) as likely as adults in the general population to be charged with a crime (7% vs. 3%). Among CRT clients, the rate of criminal charging is highest for the 18-34 age group (14%), and in that age group, men and women are equally likely to be charged with a crime. The difference between criminal charging for young CRT clients and young adults in the general population, however, is much greater for women (almost 5 times as likely) than for men (only 2 times as likely).

In terms of incarceration, CRT clients are almost four times as likely as adults in the general population to be incarcerated (4% vs. 1%). Among CRT clients, the rate of criminal charging is highest for the 18-34 age group (13%). Among those young adults, men were much more likely to be incarcerated than women (18% vs. 7%), but the difference between incarceration for young CRT clients and young adults in the general population, was much greater for women (8 times as likely) than for men (3 times as likely).

We look forward to your comments regarding this analysis, your interpretation of the findings, and your suggestions for further analysis will be welcome as well. As always, you can reach us at pip@ddmhs.state.vt.us or 802-241-2638.

Criminal Charge and Incarceration Rates
Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Clients and the General Population
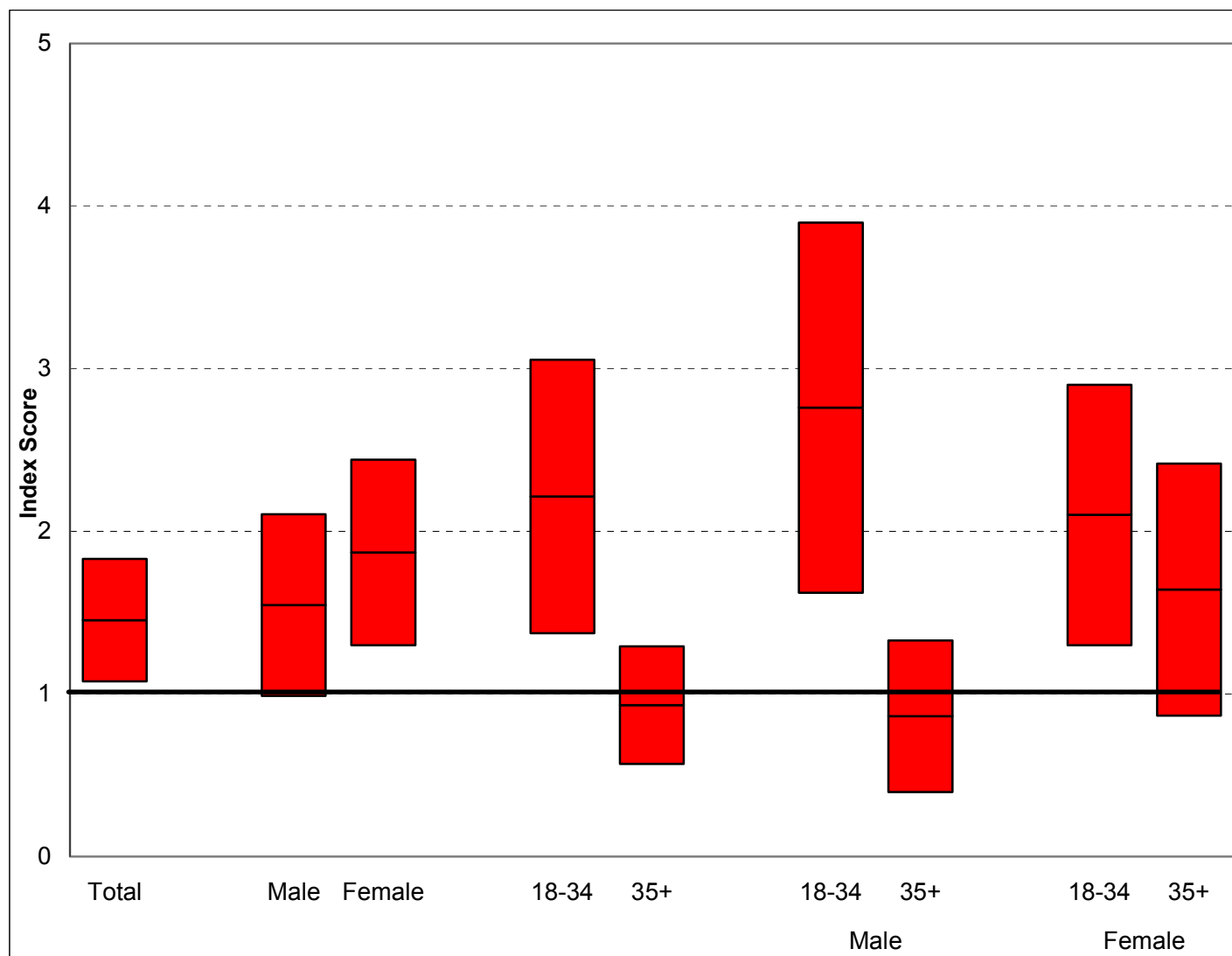## Vermont: FY 2001 - FY 2003

Percent Charged with a Crime

Percent Incarcerated

						Male		Female	
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35+	18-34	35+	18-34	35+
CRT									
# Served	3,192 ± 14	1,467 ± 9	1,725 ± 11	701 ± 6	2,491 ± 13	382 ± 4	1,086 ± 8	319 ± 4	1,406 ± 10
% Charged	7% ± 1%	10% ± 3%	5% ± 1%	14% ± 4%	6% ± 1%	13% ± 4%	8% ± 2%	14% ± 4%	4% ± 1%
% Incarcerated	5% ± 1%	8% ± 2%	3% ± 1%	13% ± 3%	3% ± 1%	18% ± 5%	4% ± 2%	7% ± 2%	2% ± 1%
Relative Rate*	0.67 ± 0.2	0.81 ± 0.3	0.47 ± 0.1	0.96 ± 0.4	0.48 ± 0.2	1.34 ± 0.6	0.52 ± 0.3	0.51 ± 0.2	0.43 ± 0.2
General Population									
Total Adults	461,304	222,606	238,698	131,153	330,151	65,821	156,785	65,332	173,366
% Charged	3% ± 0%	5% ± 0%	1% ± 0%	6% ± 0%	1% ± 0%	10% ± 0%	2% ± 0%	3% ± 0%	1% ± 0%
% Incarcerated	1% ± 0%	2% ± 0%	0.3% ± 0%	3% ± 0%	1% ± 0%	5% ± 0%	1% ± 0%	1% ± 0%	0.2% ± 0%
Relative Rate*	0.46 ± 0.0	0.53 ± 0.0	0.25 ± 0.0	0.43 ± 0.0	0.52 ± 0.0	0.49 ± 0.0	0.60 ± 0.0	0.24 ± 0.0	0.26 ± 0.0
Criminalization Index**	1.45 ± 0.4	1.55 ± 0.6	1.87 ± 0.6	2.21 ± 0.8	0.93 ± 0.4	2.76 ± 1.1	0.86 ± 0.5	2.10 ± 0.8	1.64 ± 0.8

Analysis is based on extracts from Monthly Service Reports (MSR) submitted to DDMHS by the community mental health centers, Department of Corrections, and the Center for Justice Research. The extract from the MSR database included basic information about all individuals served by a Community Rehabilitation and Treatment program for adults with severe and persistent mental illness who were 18 years of age or over. The extract for the Department of Corrections included basic information about all individuals who were incarcerated in the state of Vermont. The extract for the Center for Justice Research included basic information about all individuals who were charged with a crime in the state of Vermont. Because these data sets do not share unique person identifiers, Probabilistic Population Estimation (PPE) was used to estimate the unduplicated number of people in each data set and the unduplicated number of people shared across data sets. Population estimates for adult Vermont residents were obtained from the 2000 Census.

* Relative Rate is the rate of being incarcerated divided by the rate of being charged with a crime.

**Criminalization Index (CI) is the relative rate for CRT clients divided by the relative rate for the general population. A CI not significantly different from 1.0 indicates equitable treatment of adults with serious mental illness, a CI significantly greater than 1.0 indicates that the criminal justice system "criminalizes" adults with serious mental illness, and a CI significantly less than 1.0 as describing a criminal justice system that practices "diversion" of adults with serious mental illness.

Criminalization Index
Adults with Serious Mental Illness
Vermont: FY 2001 - FY 2003

| | Total | Male | Female | 18-34 | 35+ | Male | | Female | |
						18-34	35+	18-34	35+
Criminalization Index**	1.45 ± 0.4	1.55 ± 0.6	1.87 ± 0.6	2.21 ± 0.8	0.93 ± 0.4	2.76 ± 1.1	0.86 ± 0.5	2.10 ± 0.8	1.64 ± 0.8

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